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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN HAITI

Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions wishes to draw the attention of the General Assembly to the letter of 3 March 1998 from the Chairman of the Committee to the Secretary-General, on the subject of financing the revised budget for United Nations peacekeeping operations in Haiti for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, as well as the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999 (see annex).

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ANNEX

Letter dated 3 March 1998 from the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions addressed to the Secretary-General

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered an advance draft of your report of 19 February 1998 on the financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH), the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH) and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), containing the revised budget in the amount of $34,334,400 gross ($32,963,900 net) for the peacekeeping operations in Haiti for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998, as well as the proposed budget in the amount of $18,850,500 gross ($18,022,200 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its letter of 17 November 1997, after having considered an advance copy of your report (A/52/512), it authorized you to enter into commitments up to the amount of $15,091,000 gross ($14,478,400 net) for the period from 1 July to 30 November 1997, against the resources appropriated by the General Assembly for UNSMIH, in resolution 51/15 B of 13 June 1997, to meet the cost of the peacekeeping operations in Haiti (UNSMIH and UNTMIH), pending a decision by the Security Council on the establishment of a follow-on mission in Haiti, as recommended in paragraph 40 of your report to the Security Council of 31 October 1997 (S/1997/832). Subsequently, in its letter of 18 December 1997, pending the submission of your revised budget report on the peacekeeping operations in Haiti, the Committee authorized you to enter into further commitments up to an amount of $9,237,300 gross ($8,805,800 net) for the maintenance of MIPONUH for the period from 1 December 1997 to 31 March 1998, in accordance with the provisions of section IV of General Assembly resolution 49/233 A of 23 December 1994.

The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 20 and table 1 of your draft report of 19 February 1998 that the revised estimate for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 of $32,895,400 for the requirements of the peacekeeping operations in Haiti (including $561,000 for the support account but excluding $1,999,900 from a contribution in kind) represents an increase of $17,804,500 gross ($16,434,000 net) over the appropriation and assessment of $15,091,000 gross ($14,478,400 net) provided by the General Assembly for UNSMIH in its resolution 51/15 B. The Committee further notes from paragraph 22 of the draft report that, excluding the voluntary contribution in kind of $1,714,200, the budget estimate for MIPONUH amounts to $17,136,300 gross ($16,308,000 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

The Committee notes that, consequently, in paragraph 25 of the draft report, you have requested the appropriation and assessment of the amount of $34,940,800 gross ($33,353,600 net), comprising the appropriation and assessment of $17,804,500 gross ($17,046,600 net) for the period from 1 July 1997 to 30 June 1998 and $17,136,300 gross ($16,308,000 net) for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999.

The Advisory Committee was not able to consider fully your draft report, as it was accompanied by numerous amendments and corrections provided on the day the Committee was taking up the estimates. The Committee was informed that the Secretariat had experienced serious staff shortages for the preparation of the documentation. As regards expenditures and commitments, accurate information was not available, as numerous financial transactions, in particular, payments of salaries which related to extrabudgetary accounts, had been charged to the assessed budget rather than to the corresponding trust fund accounts. These charges, in contravention of the existing procedures governing the management of trust funds, were made because the trust funds concerned had not received contributions from donors. The Committee was informed that, after finalizing the exercise of reversing charges, the Committee would be able to receive status of expenditures for the Mission. This, however, would not be available until at least three weeks from the date of the hearings.

Under the circumstances, the Advisory Committee concluded that there was no basis for it to report to the Fifth Committee on the subject at this time. The Committee requests that you prepare revised estimates for 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 based on accurate data. Your report should be simplified and all amendments and corrections should be incorporated into the new document.

Pending the finalization and submission of the revised budget document mentioned above and related action by the General Assembly, the Advisory Committee authorizes you to continue to utilize the resources already available to you, i.e. the $15,091,000 gross ($14,478,400 net) already appropriated and assessed by the General Assembly in resolution 51/15 B and the amount of $9,237,300 gross ($8,805,800 net) authorized by the Committee in its letter of 18 December 1997.

(Signed) C. S. M. MSELLE
Chairman